

## Appendix C–Project Design Features Applicable to the Otter Project

The proposed action has been designed to be implemented in accordance with Forest Plan forest-wide, Management Area 2.2, and Management Area 3.0 standards and guidelines (USDA-FS 2007a). All design criteria in the Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (or Forest Plan) (USDA FS 2007a) apply to federal actions on the Allegheny National Forest<sup>1</sup>. The Forest Plan is located on the Allegheny National Forest website at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/allegheny/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5044083>.

Project design features are highlighted applications of the Forest Plan standards and guidelines. In some cases, the standards and guidelines provide options for how they may be applied. A design feature clarifies, where necessary, how these standards and guidelines may apply to specific activities in the action alternatives.

### *Soil and Water*

- On those portions of each stand with group 2 and 3 soils, cutting and skidding are permitted during dry or frozen conditions or during the entire normal operating season using equipment meeting low ground pressure requirements (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 74**).
- Surface armoring (at stream crossings) shall be applied on planned timber haul routes prior to timber hauling (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 75**).
- In the **unnamed tributary (UNT3) of Big Mill Creek, unnamed tributary of Bloody Run, Pine Run, Spencer Run, and Bunts Run** watersheds, timber harvests shall be staggered to ensure that no more than 25 percent of any of these watersheds will be in the 0 to 5 year age class at any point during implementation of the project and that no more than 25 percent of the basal area within any of these watersheds will be removed in any five year period during implementation of the project (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 74**).

### *Non-native Invasive Plant Species*

- In order to reduce the potential for introduction or spread of non-native invasive plant species, an equipment cleaning provision will be included in timber sale and other contracts (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 53**).
- In order to reduce the potential for introduction or spread of non-native invasive plant species, use of certified weed-free seed and weed-free straw for erosion control measures will be used when available (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 53**).
- In order to reduce the potential for introduction or spread of non-native invasive plant species, materials for road construction, reconstruction, and realignment should be free of weed propagules (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 53**).

<sup>1</sup> Deviation from Forest Plan standards require an amendment to the Forest Plan. No amendments are proposed for this project. Deviations from Forest Plan guidelines are not planned for this project. If deviation from a guideline is needed during implementation, the deviation will be documented in the project file.

## ***Wildlife, Botany, and Regional Forester Sensitive Species***

- Prior to implementation, any areas proposed for action that could result in ground disturbance that were not surveyed previously shall be surveyed during the appropriate time of year when plants are identifiable to species (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 89**).
- Timber felling and skidding is permitted in **stands 886026, 886026, and 885053** from November 1 to March 31. In these stands, log landings will be designated in consultation with the project wildlife biologist (**USDA-FS 2007a**).
- Road construction, realignment, decommissioning, and maintenance activities associated with forest roads 135C and 135D are permitted from November 1 to March 31 (**USDA-FS 2007a**).
- Within **compartment 886 and stand 885053**, herbicide application and lime spreading involving heavy mechanized equipment may require a walk-through survey prior to herbicide application or liming treatments (**USDA-FS 2007a**).
- In **stands 865066 and 897032**, timber harvest activities are prohibited from March 1 to July 31. Consult with project wildlife biologist for implementation of project design features and Forest Plan standards and guidelines (**USDA-FS 2007a**).
- In all silvicultural treatments, retain and protect all known apple trees, crabapples, and native shrubs (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).
- In all silvicultural treatments, do not cut eastern hemlock or white pine greater than 18 inches in diameter at breast height to maintain large hemlock and white pine trees as seed sources and habitat components (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).
- Protect milkweed encountered in herbaceous openings, along ditchlines and roads, and abandoned well sites, when harvesting timber or spraying herbicide. Regulate timing of mowing and prescribed burning to enhance milkweed growing conditions in selected herbaceous openings (**USDA-FS 2007a, pages 80 and 81**).
- In **stands 897021 and 897020**, timber harvest activities are prohibited from March 1 to August 31. Consult with project wildlife biologist for implementation of project design features and Forest Plan standards and guidelines (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 86**).
- Road construction, reconstruction, realignment, and maintenance of **forest road 300B** are prohibited from March 1 to August 31. Consult with project wildlife biologist for implementation of project design features and Forest Plan standards and guidelines (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 86**).
- White pine, oak, cucumbertree, and apple trees will not be felled or damaged during implementation of large woody debris introductions into streams. Mast-producing shrubs will not be damaged during implementation of large woody debris introductions into streams. In addition, native plant and shrub communities will be protected from aquatic treatments (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).
- In all dispersed recreation site treatments, protect native vegetation while closing, rehabilitating, and correcting soil and water concerns. This includes, but is not limited to, native plants, shrubs, and trees and wildlife habitat components of conifer, apple, and aspen trees (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).

- In all road decommissioning treatments, protect native vegetation. This includes but is not limited to, native plants, shrubs, and trees and wildlife habitat components of conifer, apple, and aspen. trees (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).
- In all wildlife opening rehabilitation treatments (existing herbaceous openings), protect existing apple trees, native shrubs, fences, and other wildlife structures (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**). In all prescribed burning treatments in herbaceous wildlife openings, protect all threatened and endangered species, promote their habitat, and protect existing wildlife improvements and infrastructure, such as wildlife planting and fencing, and den/nesting structures. (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 81**).
- Consult with the project wildlife biologist prior to locating skid trails or log landings in wildlife openings. Maintain current access to all wildlife openings. All disturbed or impacted areas within wildlife openings will be rehabilitated back to their current condition (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 81**).
- Based on GIS data, **stands 870017 and 871108** overlap designated, mapped National Wetland Inventory areas, which may include vernal pools. Avoidance of these wetlands shall be accomplished during layout and all applicable Forest Plan standards and guidelines will be followed (**USDA-FS 2007a, pages 77–78**).
- Based on GIS data, **stands 865055, 870014, 870017, and 871108** are within 100 feet of designated, mapped National Wetland Inventory areas, which may include vernal pools. **Stands 865055, 870013, 870014, 870017, and 871108** are within 200 feet of designated National Wetland Inventory areas, which may include vernal pools. Avoidance of these wetlands shall be accomplished during layout and all applicable Forest Plan standards and guidelines will be followed (**USDA-FS 2007a, pages 77–78**).
- In **stands 865033, 865078, 866003, 866007, 870005, 870012, 870043, 870082, 871049, 871069, 871071, 871108, 886056, 897032, and 897038**, layout reserve areas to include native plant communities. Consult with the project wildlife biologist or district botanist for recommendations (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).
- **Stands 865018, 865033, 865066, 865072, 865078, 866007, 866008, 866044, 870003, 870005, 870012, 870013, 870014, 870015, 870016, 870017, 870022, 870033, 870043, 870049, 870059, 870082, 871028, 871064, 871069, 871073, 882095, 885016, 885024, 885053, 885080, 886008, 886013, 886018, 886020, 886025, 886027, 886049, 886055, 886056, 886057, 886058, 886068, 897016, 897021, 897032, and 897038** contain seeps, springs, intermittent, perennial streams, vernal pools and wetlands. Avoidance of these wetlands and wet areas shall be accomplished during layout and all applicable Forest Plan standards and guidelines will be followed (**USDA-FS 2007a, pages 77–78**).
- **Stands 865018, 871069, 886020, 870003, 870012, 87033, 870043, and 897032** are within 100 feet of perennial sections of streams, including Spencer Run, Otter Run, and several unnamed tributaries to Big Mill Creek. For timber harvest activities, buffer perennial stream sections at least 100 feet (**USDA-FS 2007a, pages 74–76**).
- In **stands 870005, 870012, 870015, 870016, 870038, 870043, 870046, 871108, 882095, 886025, 886026, 886027, 870059, and 870080**, layout reserve areas to include rock/boulder complexes within these stands (**USDA-FS 2007a, page 65**).

- In stands 865012, 865018, 865066, 865071, 865072, 865078, 866003, 866007, 866008, 866044, 870003, 870013, 870014, 870016, 870017, 870030, 870046, 870049, 870082, 871028, 871033, 871049, 871052, 871064, 871069, 871071, 882062, 885024, 885080, 897020, 897032, 897034, 886013, and 886048, layout reserve areas to include conifer, large white pine and hemlock trees, and hemlock regeneration within these stands (USDA-FS 2007a, page 65).
- Limestone material will not be used for resurfacing forest road 237 in the vicinity of the cranberry bog area (stand 882074) (USDA-FS 2007a, page 89).

### ***Heritage***

- Site-specific heritage design features are not listed due to the confidential nature of the information. Standards and guidelines for heritage resources are listed in the Forest Plan and Otter Cultural Resource Report. Appropriate heritage resource personnel will be contacted prior to formalizing any sale or implementation contract or other resource treatments involving ground disturbing activities to include any design features to heritage sites in contracts or agreements (USDA-FS 2007a, page 62).
- In any contract or agreement, the following statement will be included, as appropriate: If any previously unknown or unrecorded sites are found during project implementation, any ground disturbing activity will cease and the appropriate heritage resource personnel notified. A heritage resource specialist will evaluate the situation and determine the proper course of action (USDA-FS 2007a, page 62).

### ***Scenery and Recreation***

- Along concern level 1 and 2 travel ways (state route 948 and forest roads 143, 237, and 339), leave ¼ acre buffer areas or feather edges of openings, as needed (USDA-FS 2009, pages 7– 8).
- Log landings shall incorporate screening when viewed from a concern level 1 or 2 travel way (state route 948 and forest roads 143, 237, and 339) and be rehabilitated to mimic natural openings (USDA-FS 2009, pages 7– 8).
- Along state route 948 and forest roads 143, 237, and 339, slash shall be pulled back 50 feet from the edge of the road or trail, and for an additional 50 feet, slash shall be lopped and scattered to a depth of 3 feet. Treatment should be accomplished within one year of harvesting (USDA-FS 2009, pages 7– 8).
- All stumps within 50 feet of and visible from state highway 948 (concern level 1 travel way) shall be flush cut (USDA-FS 2009b, pages 7–8).